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IMAGES IN CARDIOLOGY

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Arterial supply to left arm via patent left internal mammary artery graft



A 66-year-old woman presented with recurrent angina. Her previous history included two previous myocardial infarctions followed by four vessel coronary bypass surgery (CABG) in 1995. Angiography demonstrated three patent vein grafts. On attempting to image the left internal mammary artery (LIMA) it proved impossible to pass a catheter up the left subclavian artery (LSA). Angiography showed occlusion of the LSA. However, on cannulating the native left coronary circulation the LIMA graft was widely patent and filling retrogradely to perfuse the left arm (see panel). On further questioning the patient admitted experiencing pain in her left arm on moving this limb. Blood pressure in her left arm (149/76 mm Hg) was lower than her right (184/99 mm Hg).

We believe this to be the first reported case of this type with a LIMA graft effectively functioning in a retrograde manner to supply the left arm.

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